

service-connected disabilities receiving higher priority and immediate attention, and those veterans in generally good health and with income exceeding a certain threshold receiving a lower priority for scheduling of care.

Presently, veterans without severe service-connected disabilities and whose income is above the level that makes them eligible for free care may obtain needed medications at VA facilities for the very reasonable cost of \$2 per prescription per 30-day supply. However, VA facilities only dispense prescription medications to veterans who have received prescriptions from VA physicians after an outpatient visit. While I have heard from many veterans who would like to take advantage of reduced-cost prescription medications, those who are not severely disabled, poor, or suffering from service-connected ailments are faced with waiting periods for the necessary outpatient visits that stretch from several months to over a year. This places an unnecessary financial burden upon our veterans who may be forced to pay retail prices for prescription drugs in the months before they can get in to see a VA primary care physician. This policy can also impose a health burden, as this extensive wait sometimes discourages veterans from seeking VA medication treatment altogether.

My legislation would allow veterans immediate access to prescription medications offered through the VA by allowing our veterans to use prescriptions written by their family physician to receive the VA's reduced-cost prescription drugs.

Not only will this facilitate timely access to needed medications, but this bill would reduce the caseload of outpatient visits that health care personnel at VA facilities must cope with daily in the delivery of care to our veterans. The effect of this legislation would be to permit VA facilities to devote more time and resources to assisting those veterans who require inpatient care.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation to give our nation's veterans prompt access to the prescription medications that they need and have earned.

**PRE-PEACHTREE ROAD RACE
TRAINING CAMP FOR WHEEL-
CHAIR ATHLETES**

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Anytime a world-class sporting event is hosted in an area, the community benefits. Georgia's annual Peachtree Road Race is no exception. Athletes of every skill level come from all around the world to participate in the 10 kilometer race and sports exposition. Once again, the city of Cedartown, Georgia, is carrying on a tradition of sports excellence by hosting the second annual Cedartown Pre-Peachtree Training Camp for the world's premier wheelchair athletes.

This event, hosted by Cedartown's own Krige Schabert, 2000 Olympic marathon silver medalist, will bring championship wheelchair

racers from many countries to the camp, scheduled for the week of June 26, 2001. Not only will these top athletes be able to train in conditions that simulate the Peachtree Road Race, but they will have the opportunity to compete in front of the community in two organized race events.

Athletics enrich our lives and serve to bring our communities together. In recent years, Georgia has become known as one of the top sports centers in the world. I am proud to say the city of Cedartown is contributing to that sports reputation with the Pre-Peachtree Training Camp for wheelchair athletes. I join in welcoming these world-class athletes to Georgia's Seventh District.

BACK TO HEALTH MONTH

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, back pain will affect eight out of ten Americans at some point in their lives, and is the second most common reason that people visit a physician. For this reason, I rise today to draw attention to a national campaign which recently concluded: "Back to Health" Month.

Launched by the North American Spine Society (NASS), April served as Back to Health Month. In reality, if you are one of the millions who suffer from back pain, this is an issue of importance all year. NASS seeks to raise awareness of the impact of back pain on the lives of the American public and steps we all can take to maintain a strong and healthy back. Back pain represents a serious quality of life issue that is an all too common reality for many Americans, Mr. Speaker. Back problems also bring major economic consequences as well. Each year, back pain results in more lost days from work than any other ailment, except general bone and joint "problems." In fact, there are more back injuries and disorders per 10,000 U.S. workers than any other musculoskeletal condition.

In the month of April, Mr. Speaker, the North American Spine Society sponsored regional events around the country to highlight the importance of a healthy back, including "Back to Health Day" on Capitol Hill on April 24th.

I encourage my colleagues to share this information with their constituents. Back pain is a problem which affects nearly all of us, but it is a problem that can be properly treated. I applaud NASS' efforts to get America "Back to Health."

**HONORING DOCTOR GUNVANTRAY
B. MEHTA**

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize an outstanding man in my district, Gunvantray B. Mehta, MD. Dr. Mehta was

awarded the Key to the Golden Door Award by Toledo's International Institute on March 31, 2001. This award is given to a naturalized citizen who has made a significant contribution to the betterment of people. I join with people from throughout my community in congratulating Dr. Mehta on his receipt of this award.

Born in Gujarat, India, Dr. Mehta first traveled to New York in 1972 for advanced medical study in Radiology at the Nassau County Medical Center. He arrived in Toledo later in that decade, where he joined X-Ray Associates in 1978. Initially drawn to Toledo to be nearer family, Dr. Mehta was soon immersed in its vibrant and active Indian community. As a strong leader in that community, Dr. Mehta has long been involved in its signature events including productions of Ramayan and Shakunthla. He organized a memorable seven day celebration culminating in the 1989 opening of Toledo's Hindu Temple and served as its first president. Dr. Mehta is also a leader in the medical community, and is an active participant in several local, state, and national professional organizations. He is currently the president of X-Ray Associates. Married to I'la, the couple has two children, daughter Dr. Minal and son Sandip.

The International Institute's tribute notes, "When asked who was the one person who made the greatest impact on his life, Dr. Mehta quickly answers his mother. From her, he learned that helping people should become second nature, and without having to think about it, a way of life. She motivated him to strive for excellence." I have known Dr. Mehta for many years. He is a caring, generous, and deeply committed man. While putting the American Dream into action, he never lost touch with his ancestry, his faith, or his country of origin. He is an ambassador in the truest sense of the word. How fortunate our community has been to have the Mehta family a part of us.

**COMMUNITY CARE FOR THE ELDERLY
RECOGNIZED FOR TEN
YEARS OF SERVICE**

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 3, 2001

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on May 15th, 2001 Community Care for the Elderly (CCE) will celebrate 10 years of providing quality care and opportunities to improve the quality of life for Milwaukee's low-income elderly through the Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). During the past 10 years PACE has helped over a thousand vulnerable seniors avoid nursing home placement and maintain their quality of life. PACE is a shining example of excellence in elderly health care.

Milwaukee's CCE Program for All-inclusive Care for the Elderly is the fourth site of its kind in the United States. Milwaukee's PACE site is staffed by an extremely dedicated group who also work to assist elderly care providers around the nation to implement this innovative health care delivery system.

Community Care's PACE site provides comprehensive case management and access to a